

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
U.S. Appln. No. 09/848,225

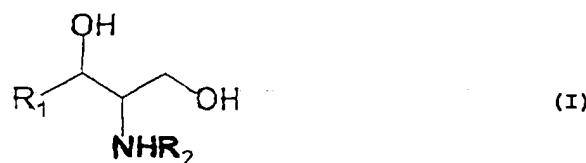
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-6 (canceled).

7. (currently amended): A method of preparing a clear aqueous composition, which is not irritating to the skin, consisting essentially of 1.0 to 5.0% by weight of a ceramide represented by formula (I):



wherein R_1 represents a hydrocarbon group having 9 to 17 carbon atoms; and R_2 represents an acyl group having 2 to 30 carbon atoms which can contain a hydroxyl group, comprising adding water to a lipid composition consisting essentially of (A) said ceramide, (B) a long-chain fatty acid having 12 to 24 carbon atoms, and (C) a nonionic surface active agent, and wherein the weight ratio of component (A) to component (B) is from 20:1 to 1:3, and the weight ratio of component (A) to component (C) is from 1:1 to 1:10, whereby said lipid composition upon combination with water will yield a clear aqueous ceramide composition, and wherein the lipid composition is uniformly mixed while heating at 80 to 120°C, water is

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heated to 80 to 100°C, and the lipid composition and water are then mixed uniformly to prepare the clear aqueous composition which is not irritating to the skin. and wherein the adding of the water to the lipid composition is while uniformly mixing the water and the lipid composition while heating at 80-120°C.

Claims 8-11 (canceled).

12. (currently amended): The method of claim 157, wherein the long-chain fatty acid is at least one of isostearic acid and oleic acid.

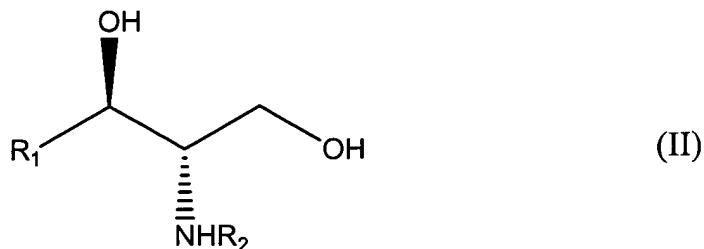
13. (currently amended): The method of claim 157, wherein the non-ionic surface active agent is a polyoxyethylene hydrogenated castor oil.

14. (currently amended): The method of claim 157, wherein there is further added to the water and the lipid composition cholesterol.

Please add the following new claims:

15. (new): The method of claim 7, wherein said ceramide represented by formula (I) is an optically active ceramide of natural type represented by formula (II):

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wherein R₁ and R₂ are as defined in claim 7.

16. (new): The method of claim 15, wherein the long-chain fatty acid is isostearic acid and oleic acid in combination.

17. (new): The method of claim 16, wherein the non-ionic surface active agent is a polyoxyethylene hydrogenated castor oil and wherein there is further added to the water and the lipid composition cholesterol.

18. (new): The method of claim 15, wherein the compound represented by formula (II) is selected from the group consisting of:

(2S, 3R)-2-tetradecanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,

(2S, 3R)-2-hexadecanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,

(2S, 3R)-2-octadecanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,

(2S, 3R)-2-nonadecanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,

(2S, 3R)-2-eicosanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,

(2S,3R)-2-oleoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,

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(2S, 3R)-2-linoleylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,
(2S, 3R)-2-(2-hydroxyhexadecanoyl) aminoctadecane-1,3-diol,
(2S,3R)-2-(3-hydroxyhexadecanoyl) aminoctadecane-1,3-diol,
(2S, 3R)-2-tetradecanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,
(2S, 3R)-2-hexadecanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,
(2S, 3R)-2-octadecanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,
(2S, 3R)-2-nonadecanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,
(2S, 3R)-2-eicosanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,
(2S, 3R)-2-oleylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol,
(2S,3R)-2-linoleylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol, and
(2S,3R)-2-(2-hydroxyhexadecanoyl)aminoctadecane-1,3-diol.

19. (new): The method according to claim 15, wherein the compound of formula (II) is
(2S, 3R)-2-octadecanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol.

20. The method according to claim 17, wherein the compound of formula (II) is (2S,
3R)-2-octadecanoylaminoctadecane-1,3-diol.